

Minutes of: POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 2 September 2008

**Present: Councillor Morris (Chair)
Councillors Cheetham (substituting for H Steen),
Farrington, Forshaw, May, Pilling and Thorne (substituting
for Evans).
Mr P Ham (Co-opted Member)**

**In Attendance: Liz Murphy, Head of People and Policy
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Officer
Councillor Swain, Leader of the Council
Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder, Regeneration and
Leisure**

Also Present: 1 Member of the public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and asked Members and Officers to introduce themselves.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors H Steen and Councillor Evans.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 July 2008 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

No urgent items were raised under this item.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were raised by members of the public.

6. PENNINE LANCASHIRE MULTIAREA AGREEMENT

The Leader of the Council presented a report updating Members on the arrangements for the Pennine Lancashire Multi Area Agreement, which would be

presented to Cabinet on 10 September. He informed Members that this agreement would form the work programme of the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company. Additional meetings were scheduled between now and November with all parties involved, including Government Officers, before the final draft of the document would be completed.

The Leader of the Council informed the meeting that the Government was now only dealing with larger bodies for funding. By joining with other authorities with similar regeneration issues applications could be submitted direct to the Government.

Members raised a number of questions to which the Leader of the Council responded:

- Perception about the state of Rossendale
- How we will guarantee we will get our share of the funding
- How many authorities had signed up
- Impact and implications if any authority did not join
- Government input
- Timescales
- Set up costs
- Monitoring of outcomes
- Transport infrastructure
- IT infrastructure
- Education
- Housing strategy
- Unadopted roads
- Links with the North West Regional Development Agency
- Impact of political change
- Government role

Resolved:

1. The Committee recommend that the Cabinet approve the Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement in principle and delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to consider and agree amendments to the document prior to final signing.
2. The Committee recommend that emphasis be given to the Housing Strategy, Education, IT infrastructure, Transport infrastructure including rail and road networks and unadopted roads.

7. HOUSING AND REGENERATION BILL - UPDATE

The Head of Regeneration presented a verbal update and brief on the Housing and Regeneration Bill. He explained that the Bill was in three parts and updated members with the information contained within the Bill on Homes and Communities Agency, regulations of social housing and other provisions including sustainability certificates, landlord and tenant matters and housing finance.

Members raised a number of questions to which the Head of Regeneration

responded:

- Number of Housing Associations in Rossendale
- Star ratings
- Monitoring arrangements and inspections
- Right to buy
- Anti-social behaviour

Resolved:

That the contents of the briefing document be noted and a full report be brought to the next Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting.

8. PROPOSALS MAP DPD (DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT) – BRIEFING PAPER

A briefing update from the Planning Unit Manager was circulated on the Proposals Map Development Plan Document (DPD). The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure informed Members that the documents that would inform the Proposals Map DPD were constantly changing and being updated. Therefore, at present it was not possible to update the document.

In response to questions from a member of the public the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure confirmed that when documents were ready they would come back to Policy Overview and Scrutiny for consultation.

Resolved:

That the briefing report be noted and the Planning Unit Manager be invited to give a more in depth update at the next Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

9. ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Head of People and Policy introduced the Organisation Development Plan, which is a three year plan that is updated on a yearly basis. She informed Members that all staff have Personal Development Plans and have access to training opportunities. She also informed that they were looking at cross team working to build capacity.

Members raised a number of questions to which the Head of People and Policy responded:

- Health and Safety
- Focus on what we provide in terms of services
- Rossendale as a place to live, work and visit
- Booklet with policies and entitlements
- Computer provision and availability of documents
- Apprenticeships, student and graduate placements
- Other agency involvement

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted and emphasis be given to encouraging apprenticeships, and student/graduate placements.

10. DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

The Head of People and Policy introduced the Domestic Abuse Policy. The policy was for employees of the Council, but also incorporated a multi-agency approach to encourage signposting to appropriate services. She informed Members that the document identified where information, support and advice is available.

Members raised a number of questions to which the Head of People and Policy responded:

- Was the policy for the community as well?
- Councillor diaries and contact numbers
- Bury and Rochdale Women's Refuge
- Police involvement
- Contact numbers on page 7

Resolved

1. That the contents of the report be noted..
2. That extra information be included on the Bury and Rochdale Women's refuge.

11. FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1st SEPTEMBER 2008 TO 31st DECEMBER 2008

The Committee reviewed the key decisions within the Forward Plan for the period 1st September 2008 to 31st December 2008.

The Committee and Member Services Officer indicated that three items had already been agreed for the next meeting in November, an update on the Proposals Map DPD, a report on the Housing and Regeneration Bill and a report on the Enforcement Policy.

It was agreed that the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee would also like to consider the Pennine Lancashire Development Company and Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement before going back to Cabinet.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.35pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date